WHIRRAKEE

August 2005 Vol. 26 No. 7

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.
Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552
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Office Bearers for 2004 - 2005

President	Matthew Comer	46 Railway Place, Goornong	5432 2380
Senior Vice President	Stuart Fraser	12 Bambara Close, Bendigo	
Junior Vice President	vacant		
Secretary	Bill Holsworth	13 Nabilla Crs, Bendigo e-mail:wholsworth@bigpond.com	5443 4063
Minute Secretary	Jane Cleary	24 Goynes Road, Epsom	5448 4396
	Jan Orr	2 Cockerel Court, Bendigo	5443 5668
Treasurer	Stuart Fraser		
Membership Officer	Kate Lottkowitz	80 Piccaninny Rd, RSD Strathfieldsaye	5439 3157
Excursion organiser	done by the committee		
Syllabus organiser	Rod Orr	2 Cockerel Court, Bendigo	5443 5668
Librarian	Diana Collier	31 Milroy Street, Bendigo	5443 0137
Garden Convenor/Secretary	Matthew Comer	46 Railway Place, Goornong	5432 2380
Hall Management	Maurie Lewis		0407 427179
Whirrakee contact	Sabine Wilkens	82 Somerville Street, Bendigo e-mail: s.wilkens@latrobe.edu.au	5443 2797

Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The invited speaker at general meetings starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper.
If a workshop is held prior to the meeting, it will be advertised and it usually starts at 7.00pm.
The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearer listed above and the following members: Rob Moors, Maurie Lewis, Glenise Moors, Rod Orr, Bob Ruddick, and there are 3 vacancies.

Excursions are conducted irregularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. In addition to local excursions, campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one active group that meets regularly (the Fauna Study Group) and other groups that meet at irregular intervals.

Fauna Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Bird Observers Group: This group has field excursions and the occasional lecture evening. Please consult the *Whirrakee* for details. Special bird observations should be reported to Anne Bridley 5449 3479.
To propose meetings or excursions please contact Kerrie Norris 5447 8017.

Front cover photo?...see bottom of page 2.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 26, No.7, August 2005

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles.
Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editor's note: Included in this edition is a subscription reminder. This year, the subscription rate, unlike the price of petrol, has not increased, so please pay promptly to avoid being chased by the treasurer. Another fantastic way of parting with your money would be for you to consider joining us in our 60th anniversary celebration. We are celebrating with a dinner and a very interesting speaker. Please consider coming along. There are certainly lots of reasons to celebrate this occasion (see page 3 for dinner and speaker details and page 8 for a short history of the club and some of the characters that have made it so colourful).

Front Cover Photograph:

Photographer: Harry Fleury
We are staying with the spider theme…this wintery photo shows a scene from the western slope of Mt Alexander at North Harcourt.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is 60!

Your Invitation to the 60th Anniversary of the Bendigo field Naturalists' Club

I know it's hard to believe but our Club is 60. It was formed in 1945 by a small group of committed Bendigo people who were very interested in our surrounding bushland and wanted to share their interests, knowledge and enthusiasm with others, so they established the Bendigo Field Naturalists' Club.

Our club has remained healthy and active since then and has made many strong links with other Natural History and Conservation groups, particularly the local organisations BDEC (Bendigo and District Environment Council) and Bushlinks, and EV (Environment Victoria) and VNPA (Victorian Natural Parks Association) both based in Melbourne but with Victoria-wide interests. We also correspond with and meet many people with similar interests and concerns in other regions of Victoria and southern NSW (through SEANA, the South-Eastern Association of Naturalists' Associations) and in other States (through the ANN, the Australian Naturalists' Network).

Although our activities and interests have evolved over these 60 years to reflect the changing interests and expectations of our members, the Bendigo Field Naturalists' Club Inc. still retains its core values of encouraging a wider interest in and a deeper understanding of all aspects of our surrounding natural environment.

We have worked towards many important achievements during our short history, particularly in providing educational materials through our publications and through our efforts to develop a better understanding and a wider appreciation of the values of Bendigo's Box-Ironbark forests, and to gain a significant improvement in their status and protection in Box-Ironbark Regional and National Parks.

The Committee Members consider that we should all feel proud of our Club's achievements and that this occasion is worth celebrating, so we have organised our **60th Anniversary Dinner** on **August 31**, at **The Vineyard** (2 Abel Street, Golden Square), **6:30 for 7 pm** (Coffee, tea & water provided; Licensed BYO - please bring all other drinks you require).

Our Guest Speaker for this occasion will be **Dr David Horton**, author of ***The Pure State of Nature*** - David is an Archaeologist, Anthropologist, and he is also a Farmer who lives in country NSW . **The title of his talk is 'Fire; Prehistory; Politics'.**

Please reserve your seat as early as possible **(before Wednesday August 17 at the latest!)** by completing the attached form (or copying out the information) and sending $40 per person to: The Secretary, Bendigo Field Naturalists' Club Inc., PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552, or by paying one of the Committee who can sell you a numbered ticket to this dinner.

The Secretary, Bendigo Field Naturalists' Club Inc., PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552

Please reserve .....Anniversary Dinner seats for me @ $40 per person.
Total Payment is enclosed for $.....

Name:.....

.....

Address:.....

.....

Special Dietary Requirements?.....

.....

Short Notices

A New Book for Bendigo....
Wildlife of the Box-Ironbark Country

Wildlife of the Box-Ironbark Country
By Chris Tzaros
Published by CSIRO Publishing at an advertised cost of $39.95 plus $9.00 for postage and handling.
The second lot of orders for this book are now available for $30.00 at the August general meeting. If you would like to buy this book through the Club, and missed placing an order, we could make an additional order if there is sufficient demand. Please send a message Bill Holsworth (5443 4063). The books will NOT be re-ordered if only a very few members want it.

Editor's Note: Quite a few members have already purchased this book and I have also seen it at the Goldfields Library. Would anyone volunteer to do a book review for the Whirrakee?

Challenges for Bird Conservation in the 21st Century:
Birds in a Changing Environment
BIRDS AUSTRALIA SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS AND CAMPOUT
Bendigo, Victoria, October 2005

Further information:
More information about the Congress, including location, accommodation and activities is available on the Congress website
http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au/congress/index.html

Bendigo Field Naturalists' Club Name Badges
The Committee has investigated the costs of producing Name Badges for members who don't have one.
If we are able to order 20 or more new badges then the cost will be $6-60 for each badge - for smaller numbers or single orders the badges will cost more than $9 each.
Please let us know, by leaving a phone message on 5443 5668, if you want your name to be added to the list for Name Badges. We intend to order them as soon as possible after the first 20 names have been received. If we can not achieve this threshold number we will still try to negotiate the best price and let you know what this is before we have them made.

Don't forget to look for Glenise's and Jan's banded Flame Robins...
(see article in the July Whirrakee)

Please help us find our birds and collect more information. Jan's contact details are Phone (03) 54435668 and mine are Phone (03) 54396254 and e-mail: glenise@netcon.net.au

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Camp Outs

Australian Naturalists Network (ANN) Get-together
The Australian Naturalists Network (ANN) has sent a reminder that all Naturalists in Australia are invited to the Get-together in the High Country of Victoria from 16 Jan. to 2 Feb.2006. See back cover for details.

SEANA Spring Camp
The South East Australian Naturalists Association (SEANA) will hold its spring camp at Mallacoota 14-18 October. This year's camp is hosted by the Sale and District Field Naturalists' Club. Registration is $40.00 plus extra for meals if required, plus extra for some excursions. Forms will be available at the next meeting or from Bill Holsworth at home. They should be sent to the organiser by 29 July.

July General meeting – speaker: Jim Radford "Cooperative breeding in Australian treecreepers, particularly the White-browed Treecreeper"

by Sabine Wilkens (with notes supplied by Jim Radford)

Jim Radford is a member of the Landscape Ecology Research Group in the School of Ecology and Environment at Deakin University. I was actually absent for this talk but Jim has very kindly supplied me with his power point slides and so this is a summary from those slides.

The Australian Treecreepers are in the Family Climacteridae which contains two genera, *Cormobates* and *Climacteris* and seven species. These are:
Cormobates leucophaeus, the White-throated Treecreeper and *Cormobates placens*, the Papuan Treecreeper, *Climacteris picumnus*, the Brown Treecreeper, *C. rufa*, the Rufous Treecreeper, *C. melanura*, the Black-tailed Treecreeper make up the 'picumnus' group and *C. erythrops*, the Red-browed Treecreeper and *C. affinis*, the White-browed Treecreeper make up the 'erythros' group.

Many Australian birds exhibit 'cooperative breeding', in fact, Australia seems to be a hot spot for it. Jim defined cooperative breeding, from Boland and Cockburn (*Emu*, 102: 9-18, 2002), as a 'mating system in which more than one pair of individuals exhibit parent like behaviour towards offspring of a single nest brood'.

This sort of breeding system is quite rare on a global scale (3% of bird species worldwide) but amongst the Australian Corvida it occurs in 41% of genera and 29% of species. It has been suggested that this behaviour evolved very early in the old endemic Australian bird families.

Below are some facts and figures from the literature:
The White-throated Treecreeper is a non-cooperative breeder while four other species (Brown, Rufus, Red-browed and White-browed Treecreepers) are cooperative in their social organization. The mean clutch size and nestling period of the White-throated species is not obviously different from the other four species. However, the incubation of the first species is 23 days while the other four all have shorter incubation times, 16, 17, 18 and 18 days respectively. The White-throated Treecreeper is rarely multi-brooded, while the other four are at least occasionally so.
Overall, the number of fledglings per season per breeding unit appear to be smaller in the non-cooperative breeder (1.31) compared to figures found for the other species (1.36 and 2.00 for the Brown Treecreeper, 2.1 for the Rufous, 1.1 for the Red-browed and 1.58 for the White-browed Treecreeper.

This study concentrated on the White-browed Treecreeper *Climacteris affinis* (local indigenous name: Tiru-tiru). This bird is a facultative cooperative breeder (in other words it does not have to breed in this manner). It is a threatened species in Victoria and the eastern sub-species is near-threatened nationally. The study was conducted in the north-western corner of Victoria. This represents the southern distribution limit for this species. In north-west Victoria, the White-browed Treecreeper has a strong habitat preference for belah woodland and pine-buloke woodland.

A colour banded population of White-browed Treecreepers was established within a 120 ha study plot at Yarrara FF Reserve, and studied during the 1998 and 1999 breeding seasons. During the study, Jim recorded nest site characteristics, nesting behaviour, reproductive success, and territory size and quality. Nesting behaviour was monitored by two hour nest watches.

It was found that the birds in this population were fiercely territorial with the territories being held all year long and being of an average size of 8.5 ha (range: 4-12ha). There was only a small overlap between territories and the actual size of the territory was not related to the size of the group that defended it.

About two-thirds of all breeding units monitored consisted of a single pair (i.e. no helpers present). However, helpers were present in about 35% of breeding units. Helpers were always male, and were most likely offspring of the breeding pair that remained in their home territory. Most cooperative groups included only a single helper but one breeding unit with three helpers was present in 1998. The group composition is thus flexible, reinforcing the facultative' status of cooperative breeding in this species.

Several measures of breeding success were recorded in these two years.
After running all the analyses it was found that there were no differences between pairs (no helpers) and groups (helpers present) in

- habit quality or territory size
- laying date
- clutch size
- hatchling success
- nestling success
- propensity for second broods (they are multi-brooded)
- productivity per nest attempt, once laying date is accounted for

however:

- successful nests were initiated earlier in the breeding season than unsuccessful nests
- groups had significantly higher seasonal productivity (e.g. mean number of fledglings produced for the entire breeding season) than pairs in one of two years (1999).

How do groups achieve this higher seasonal productivity? To answer this question, Jim had to find out what the helpers actually help with. What was observed was that they help with

- nest construction (possibly)
- feeding the incubating female
- nest maintenance
- nest sanitation
- nestling provision
- fledgling care
- territory defence
- predator detection.

The main results that can account for the increase in productivity with helpers were the following:

- productivity increased because groups have greater nest success than pairs during second broods

- females with helpers reduce their level of care to nestlings probably resulting in energy and time savings

- females with helpers re-nest sooner. The mean re-nesting interval in groups was 13.6 days while in pairs it was 28.0 days.

- all breeding units commenced breeding earlier under 'better' climatic conditions. In 1999, there was overall more rain and the bulk of egg laying was done in September with a small amount continuing into October.
  In 1998, with less rain, September represented the starting date for only a few pairs and laying continued steadily right throughout November.

So, helpers are able to 'lighten the load' of females so they can reduce the level of care they provide to the first brood. This allows females to save energy and re-nest sooner, such that they commence their second broods (when conditions allow for second broods) earlier than females without helpers. Because second broods are commenced earlier, they have a greater chance of success leading to higher overall fledgling productivity.

Thus, groups are able to capitalise on better conditions through their ability to raise two broods in relatively quick succession.

So why do helpers help? (Darwin has already struggled with this question)

Although the helpers do not directly produce offspring, they do help their kin bring up offspring more successfully and thus passing on the family genes which include their own. By staying with the group and helping they may also pay a kind of rent for the privilege of remaining in the group. This may give them later mating opportunities and even

access to the territory they have helped defend or even enlarge. During their time as helpers, birds may also gain valuable experience which may increase their later breeding success.

The White-browed Treecreeper is a facultative cooperative breeder. What stimulates the cooperative breeding behaviour in any one season?
It may the current composition of the breeding unit or parental coercion or the current or previous seasons' climatic condition that cause it.

The speaker thanked everyone involved in the project, Andrew Bennett, Birds Australia (Stuart Leslie Bird Research Fund), MA Ingram Trust, DSE, Deakin University, Parks Vic (Werrimul staff), Sunraysia BOCA and the landholders of the Yarrara district with their family and friends who helped in the field. A truly cooperative effort!

News from the club garden

By Matthew Comer

On Saturday 23rd of July six members gathered at the garden. We weeded and tidied the garden and removed some dead shrubs and branches. We also planted about fifty new plants to fill in some spaces around the garden, particularly near the entrance where two whirrakee wattles have died and been removed. The plants included some colourful shrubs such as scarlet mint bush and a variety of daisies, chocolate lilies and others to continue to enhance the entrance area, which adds to the plants put in last year.

A major thing we have learned about the garden is that it is best to take a pro-active approach to maintenance. The garden requires regular weeding, mulch needs to be topped up as it de-composes to prevent further weed invasion and an ongoing program of replacement planting is important. Different species in the garden have a variety of life cycles. Some are very long lived but others have a naturally shorter life span. Some species are regenerating naturally but others aren't. We still want to include these species in the garden for various reasons so we need to re-plant them periodically. For example of at least five *Grevillea alpina* plants which were originally planted only one remains, the others having gradually reached full size then died out. This species is such a characteristic and important box-ironbark plant that we still want it represented in the garden so we have added three new ones this season. It is good to have new plants coming on to replace those that are lost. (As I have been writing this I have just realised how appropriate this philosophy is in regards to office bearers and committee members, something to think about for September!).

While working around the garden the species in flower were noted. The winter wattles (*Acacia flexifolia, A. lanigera and A. genistifolia*) were looking great. A silky Hakea (*H. decurrens*) was covered in it's perfumed flowers. Yellow gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*) and red box (*E. polyanthemos)* had some blossom and the unusual heath spyridium (*S. eriocephalum*) was adorned with clusters of its minute flowers. Also in flower was the bagshot form of *Grevillea rosmarinifolia* (which Rod informed us has had several re-classifications in recent years and is probably still not settled) and the slaty she-oak (*Allocasuarina muelleriana*) with male and female flowers on separate plants. Jane Cleary commented on the new growth which has appeared on some plants since she was last in the garden before going overseas.

The other fact noted by most at the working bee was that there are many tiny weed seedlings which have responded to recent rains. These were too small to efficiently remove this time so another working bee will be necessary later on. This will be, as usual, on the Saturday before the meeting in September, this is Saturday 10th September. All are welcome to come and help out and then enjoy a cuppa.

Sixty Years of Natural History

by Matthew Comer

This year our club has reached its 60th anniversary. It is an important milestone for us and is worth celebrating. It also is a good opportunity for us to look back on the clubs history. The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has a rich and fascinating past full of interesting characters, wonderful experiences and achievements.
I have only been in the club for a very short part of that 60 years but I find the history of it very interesting and there is much to learn out of it. I have enjoyed hearing anecdotes from various people about all kinds of things: the first time crested pigeons were recorded in the district, how curlews could once be heard calling in East Bendigo, stories of how regent honeyeaters were once common in Bendigo street trees and many others.

Another great source of information is the clubs publications; "The Bendigo Naturalist", "Whirrakee", and our books. I have gleaned some snippets of information from some of these sources to share. I am hoping that this will stir other members of the club, who know much more of its history than I do, to share their memories at this anniversary time.

Among the many articles written by club members over the years all kinds of emotions are expressed by the writers from joy and awe at the wonders of nature to sadness and anger at the senseless destruction and loss of elements of our environment. There are many articles written with great passion, thorough research and even humour.

Bob Allen wrote a great little article about "Campout Reminiscences". In one part he describes waking in the morning: "What a joy then to lie on a camp stretcher with a shaft of sunlight stabbing down through the gap in the tent flap at the break of day and listen to the birds songs.
At Halls Gap the kookaburras laughed long and loud, and the men in their beds laughed with them. At Wyperfeld National Park, the white cockatoos screeched a welcome to all from their perches on the dead branches of the river red gums. The glorious carolling of magpies awakened us at Bacchus Marsh, and invited us to help them give thanks at just being alive and free. But at Eldorado I awakened to a new sound, a queer "chomping" sound. Was it an animal? No. The chomping continued. Was it branches rubbing together in the wind? No. I was about to break the dawn silence by asking the age old question; "what bird is that?" when the puzzle solved itself. From a few beds down to my left, Peter announced to anybody who cared to be listening, "Boy, this celery tastes good!"

Bob was clearly a very active member and prolific writer, often writing clever, humorous articles. In an article about "Flying Ducks of Bendigo" he starts; "As I write this article, thousands of guns are popping all over the state, as the annual slaughter of ducks takes place..... Do you know that many members of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club are duck shooters? The difference being the ducks that we shoot are the rare quaint little duck orchids, and the shooting is done with a camera". In another article about duck orchids he describes his disgust, when "On arrival at the spot we were amazed to find that an atom bomb had been exploded in the middle of the paddock, or so it appeared to us, as a picture of total desolation met our gaze. Bulldozers and trucks had been busy, and several feet of gravel from practically the whole of the paddock had been removed and carted away for road works, including the duck orchids".

Gravel extraction clearly caused great concern for members at times. In an editorial, Leon Ruedin wrote in part; "I took a quick run through the area (the Whipstick) and was horrified to find that where last year beautiful flower-gardens with untold species of wildflowers had blossomed are today only ugly scars on the face of mother earth. As these flower beds are relatively small, perhaps half an acre or only a square chain, surely this is a high price to pay for a few loads of gravel". Leon, in another fascinating article about "Our Whipstick

Mallee Fowl", mentions the fate of some of the old mallee fowl nest mounds in the Whipstick; "Some of the mounds that have been removed by local farmers for easy gravel to spread around their homes, have contained as much as 52 cubic yards of spoil. One such nest was removed by the local Shire Council, much to the disgust of the late Marc Cohn, who had shown it to many distinguished people because of its immense size and ease of access".

One of our favourite wildflowers, the Bendigo Wax, has inspired numerous members to write over the years, both with great love for this plant and frequently with some sadness. Peter Ellis writes that "The Bendigo district is generally regarded as having the best form of *Eriostemon verrucosus* and of all our wildflowers is locally the best known. Additionally it has become known as Bendigo waxflower in other districts and is usually pointed out as such and associated with Bendigo. F. Taylor, in an article called "Early Reports of Double Wax" lists a number of locations where the double flowered form of the plant was known including Longlea, McIvor road, Mandurang, Lockwood South, Barkers Creek, Diamond Hill and Sedgwick. He describes how he sent a spray of flowers from the plants at Longlea to a wildflower show in Melbourne in 1918. Mr. E. Pescott, who received the flowers replied in a letter to Mr. Taylor; "Your real surprise was the gloriously exquisite bunch of the double fairy wax flower, *Eriostemon obovalis*. My word, it created quite a sensation, and I have no hesitation in saying that it was the really best thing in the whole show. How lovely it is....." The sad Part of this story however was that Mr. Taylor describes how "on our next visit we found the three remaining plants had been dug up by persons unknown, leaving only the evidence of three holes where the plants had been".

Elsie Flanagan wrote passionately about the wax; "Fifty years ago, before the march of progress gained full stride, the hills around Bendigo were carpeted with the pink and white blossoms.....The best of the fairy wax that I have seen was not so many years ago- about ten I would think. On that never to be forgotten outing led by Mr. Takasuka to the sugar loaf hills between Axedale and Fosterville. We found in a small protected area, wax flowers six feet high in full bloom in company with the lovely fringe myrtle.....I heard one member remark "it can't be true". It was true then, but, alas not now. Will it ever come again? Yes, it will if we are wise and conserve some of our flower areas before it is too late...".

Leon Ruedin also wrote in an article called "Retrospect", about the wax and how, in his younger years he "knew of patches of wax flower (*Eriostemon verrucosus*) where one hesitated before picking a piece, as there was so much to choose from, and each piece looked better than the last". Peter Ellis also states that "50 years ago, much of our bushland was ablaze with thick waist-high "waxies". Now it is scattered and reduced in size. We have not one single reserve for the best of our waxflowers".

Most of the quotes I have used come from "The Bendigo Naturalist" volumes from 1967 to 1976. Many members of the club are no doubt very familiar with these, but some newer members maybe aren't aware of them so much. I have only scratched the surface of the writings of club members through the years. There are countless other subjects covered by many prolific writers throughout many volumes of the clubs publications. Perhaps I might explore some of these in a future Whirrakee, or as I mentioned earlier hopefully other members might share their experiences of the club.

This glimpse of some of the issues and interests which occupied the club during past times should make us feel pleased that progress has been made. We do now have secure reserves for some of Bendigo's natural environment- the remaining wildflowers of the Whipstick for example, will no longer be stripped away for gravel. Though it should also remind us of what we have lost, and to keep working hard to ensure the survival of other, still vulnerable aspects of the environment. After all, we hope future naturalists will still be able to wake up to the birds' songs.

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Guest Speaker Syllabus for General Meetings 2005

Second Wednesday of the month, 8:00 pm

Please check each ***WHIRRAKEE*** for additional events or changes.
The general meeting will start at 7:30pm, with the speaker being introduced at 8:00pm.

Date - 2005	Topic	Speaker
August 10	'Pink-tailed Worm-lizard, Hooded Scalyfoot and other rare reptiles'	Peter Robertson (Wildlife Consultant)
September 14 AGM	'Studies of the road edge effect in box and ironbark forest' (watch this spot – speakers and topic may still change)	Zoe Pocock and Ruth Lawrence (La Trobe University)
October 12	'Xanthorrhoea - ecology and flowering'	Mark Bellette (University of Melbourne)
November 9	'Owls of the World'	David Hollands (Wildlife Photographer)
December 14	Christmas Diner. 'The Giant Gippsland Earthworm - conservation issues'	Neville Rosengren (La Trobe University)

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Fauna Study Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meetings

Wednesday, August 10 7.30pm
Peter Robertson (Wildlife Consultant) will talk about 'Pink-tailed Worm-lizard, Hooded Scalyfoot and other rare reptiles'

Wednesday, September 14 7.30pm
Annual General Meeting. The speakers are Ruth Lawrence and Zoe Pocock and their topic is studies of road-edge effects in box-ironbark forest.

Fauna Group

This group meets (in the clubrooms) on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.

Excursions

Every Friday morning starting at around 9 to 9:30, the Fauna Group inspects nest boxes in the Spring Gully area. The excursions are led by Maurie Lewis, 16 Vains St. Golden Square. Phone 0407 427 179 or 5442 1813. Phone Maurie to confirm exact departure times and location. If you don't phone but go directly to Maurie's house and find nobody at the house between 9 and 9:30 then the excursion is not on.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.

W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals.
It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Natural Resources and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433.

BFNC Garden Working Bee

Regular garden working bees are held on the Saturday before each general meeting.

The next working bee will be on **Saturday, 10th of September, 9am.**

Please note that **there will be no August working bee** (see Matthew Comer's article on page 7)

All welcome

Spring in the Bendigo Bush

BFNC will have a small part in this yearly event. If anybody wants to get involved please contact Bill Holsworth or Sally Buttle at the Discovery Centre. Sally is again the chief administrator of the program.

Australian Naturalists Network (ANN) Get-together

The Australian Naturalists Network (ANN) has sent a reminder that all Naturalists in Australia are invited to the Get-together in the High Country of Victoria from 16 Jan. to 2 Feb.2006. The initial base for activities will be Feathertop Chalet, Harrietville. Excursions to Mt. Buffalo National Park, Mt. Hotham, and Mt. Bogong areas will be organised. The evening programs will include speakers on flora, fauna, fires and geology. From Thurs. 26 Jan to 2 Feb. the group will be based at the Jindabyne Sport and recreation Centre and visit areas within Kosciuszko National Park. All travel, accommodation and meals are included and "tagalong participation is not an option". The cost will be about $1,600 all inclusive, and a deposit of $500 will be due 1 August (possibly later if space is still available). Contact Bill Holsworth at home for further details.
For SEANA campout, see page 4.